

Beat: Travel

## Territorial collectivity of SAINT-BARTHELEMY After HURRICANE IRMA

### Volcanic Island Fully Encircled By Reefs

paris - SAINT-BARTHELEMY - GUADELOUPE, 28.11.2017, 07:24 Time

**USPA NEWS** - Saint Barthélemy (Ouanalao), officially the Territorial Collectivity of Saint-Barthélemy, is an Overseas Collectivity of France in the West Indies. Saint Barthélemy was for many years a French Commune forming part of Guadeloupe, which is an Overseas Region and Department of France. In 2003, the Island voted (Referendum) in favour of Secession from Guadeloupe in order to form a separate Overseas Collectivity (COM) of France. Officially published in the French Official Gazette on 22 February 2007....

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The Island was discovered in 1493 by Columbus during his Second Travel, Columbus named the Island after his Brother Bartolomeo and took possession of it in the name of the King of Spain. The Island was occupied by the French in 1648 and ran by the Knights of the Order of Malta from 1651 to 1656. Saint-Barthélemy became a French Colony in 1659... In 1946, Martinique and Guadeloupe, including St. Barths, were given the legal status of a Department of France with the same privileges and responsibilities as any of the Home Departments.

In 1957, David Rockefeller purchased a 27-ha Estate on the Island and launched the transformation of the poor Island into a safe place for Upmarket Tourism....During the last Twenty Years the Resident Population of St. Barths has more than doubled. Fewer Natives are leaving, and growing number of Outsiders are arriving to make an Island Home for themselves, especially from Metropolitan France.

Over the past 10 Years, the Islands of Saint Barthélemy and Saint Martin were engaged in a process of Political Evolution that came to fruition on February 2007 with adoption of a New Status, and the new Overseas Collectivity of Saint Barthélemy was born on July 15, 2007 and its first Territorial Council was elected....

What To Do in Saint-Barthelemy (also called Saint-Barth) :

- \* Family Vacations
- \* Sports Vacations
- \* Well-Being Vacations
- \* Romantic Vacations
- \* Tasting Vacations
- \* One Week in St Barthelemy
- \* One Day or One Week-End in Saint-Barthelemy

Today, located in the center of Saint Barthélemy, the Gustaf III Airport is the Strategic Point of Entry for most Visitors on Vacation or on Business. Limited by the Beach on one end and a Mountain on the other, the short Runway is less than one-half-mile long.

There are Private Companies whose Representatives meet you upon your arrival at Princess Juliana Airport, and drive you to the Dock where you will embark on a Motorboat, and speed off over to St Barthélemy. Its port consists of two Facilities, the Marina and Commercial Port.

They are many Events during the Year. During 2018, they will such as :

- \* January : 07 > 21 - St Barth Music Festival...
- \* February : 08 - School Carnival ; 13 - Mardi Gras ; 14 - Ash Wednesday
- \* March : 5 > 18 - Bucket Regatta
- \* April : 02 > 06 - Kid's Trophy ; 09 > 14 - St Barth sails ; 16 > 23 - Book Festival and Jazz ; 22 - Transat AG2R La Mondiale ; 26 > 01/05 - West Indies Regatta

(...)

Saint Barthélemy is a Volcanic Island fully encircled by Shallow Reefs, has an area of 25 square kilometres. The Language, Cuisine, and Culture, however, are distinctly French. The Island is a Popular Tourist Destination during the Winter Holiday Season, especially for the Rich and Famous during the Christmas and New Year Period. International Investment and the Wealth generated by Tourists explain the High Standard of Living on the Island. Most of the Food is imported from the US or France. Tourism attracts about 170,000 Visitors (Airport) and about 300,000 Visitors (Port). St. Barthélemy has about 30 small Hotels and 7 Palaces and 5\* Hotels. Tourists are divided into : 60% USA + Canada , 10% South America (mostly from Brazil) ; 30% Europe.

The French Caribbean Island of St. Barthelemy and the Franco-Dutch Isle of St. Martin, both were devastated by Hurricane Irma (95% of St. Martin was destroyed). Also, both Islands were placed on Red Alert as a second Storm, Hurricane José, was approaching threatening to paralyze all Air and Sea traffic. More than 1,100 French Emergency Services (gendarmes, police, civil security, soldiers and health personnel) have been dispatched to the two Islands, where an Emergency Electricity Network has been set up.

A Press Conference was held on November 22, 2017 at Hotel Burgundy in Paris (France) by Nils DUFAU (President of Comité Du Tourisme de Saint-Barthélemy) and Frédéric BOSSARD (General Manager of Data-Moove, start-up in Sophia-Antipolis created in 2014). It was to reassure Tourists by stating that lots was already done to be attractive again for the coming Christmas Holiday and New Year's Eve. Tourism should come back, in 2018, to its normal Rate. Because of Irma the rate fell to 25% of Hôtels' Bookings for Christmas and should rise to 50% in March 2018, to reach 80% for Summer 2018.

Nils DUFAU & Frédéric BOSSARD also presented a New App created to attract and to Inform Tourists on Saint-Barthélemy. This Project was created out of a Desire to respond to the Difficulties for Tourists to find updated information when they need it the most, during their Stay. From that, the Idea for Data-Moove was to develop an Innovative and Unique Solution to bring relevant Data to Tourists and Citizens. At the beginning, the Project was European. The App will be in three languages : English, French and Portuguese. The App to be launched Two Weeks after the Press Conference.

Source : Press Conference on November 22, 2017 @ Burgundy Hotel (Paris)

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